



St. John's United Church of Christ  
500 West Main Street, Lansdale, Pa. 19446

# Enlightener

September 2021 Vol. XLI, No. 07

## Life-Giving Words

In a recent sermon, I invited listeners to focus with me on the challenge set forth by the author of the little letter in the New Testament known as Ephesians. In chapters 4 and 5 of this little letter, we are urged to give careful thought to what we say and how we say it, our end goal being that we are to aim toward imitating God. The Revised Standard Version of the Bible introduces this passage with the heading, "Rules for the New Life." Eugene Peterson, in his paraphrase of Scripture, chooses "The Old Way Has to Go."

What, exactly, has to go? For starters, that which is not true. "Put away falsehood . . . no more lies, no more pretense. Speak the truth to your neighbors, for we are members of one another." As divided as our nation has been in recent years, we, as people of faith, are challenged to remember that, like it or not, we are members of one another. Whether we agree with our neighbor or not, we are called to speak the truth to them, making sure our words are motivated by love and intended to give grace to those who hear. We are also urged to remember that while anger in and of itself is not bad ~ and in some cases is a necessary motivator in the face of injustice ~ we must not allow our anger to cause us to do that which breaks God's heart.

In light of the fact that our words must be ones that give grace to those who hear ~ that is, words that help and not harm, that heal and not hurt ~ we would do well to beware of those whose words are full of threats and bravado; of those whose words are full of deception and half-truths; of those whose words are not motivated by a concern for the well-being of others, for such words are little more than noisy gongs and clanging cymbals.

As we seek to imitate God, we are also challenged to "put away" bitterness and wrath, anger and malice ~ behaviors that are triggered by such life-draining emotions as animosity, ill-will, hostility and rage. How, then, are we to live? "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ has forgiven you." Of course, easier said than done, but this verse of Scripture is one to hold close and seek to live by when the temptation is great to "give someone a piece of your mind" and spew vitriol and hatred in a social media post because you are convinced those who think differently than you do are worthless, or, at the very least, wrong. Our words matter, and no one made that clearer than the One who was *The Word* ~ God made flesh, living and dwelling among us. By his words and actions, Jesus showed us the way. As we lean into a new year of programs and activities in the life of the church, may we seek to be a people whose words and actions are life-giving and reflective of the loving Savior we have been called to serve.

Rev. Sue  
CS



There is a framed sign in the hallway of my home that says in bold letters, **One day at a time.**

A year and a half ago, those words were just a nice reminder to stay

present in today and not get overwhelmed by tomorrow. Now those words are our way of life and I find myself clinging to them as we keep on keeping on.



We have a special concern for the safety and the connectedness of our children, who are unvaccinated, vulnerable, yet still in need of community and the life-shaping wisdom and spirit that church offers even the youngest among us. The good news is, nothing will dampen our St. John's spirit: there will be continued connection opportunities for children this year—they just look a bit different. These plans are not cast in stone and I am counting on your continued flexibility as we take things step by step.

Here is how the next few months will unfold regarding Sunday School, Nursery, Junior Church, and some other fun opportunities.

**Sunday School** will still be in the form of Carry-Out Connections, meaning there will be a take-home lesson each week that is directly connected to the children's sermon during Sunday morning worship. Sunday School will begin in October and will take place in two "semesters," October to December and February to May. This break in January will help us all catch our breath, reevaluate our plans, and make any necessary adjustments. More information will be coming out closer to the month of October.

Much like we did for VBS this summer, we are hoping to supplement our take-home learning with an **in-person gathering each month.**

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These gatherings will likely take place on a Sunday afternoon or a weeknight, providing a way to tie our monthly learning together and connecting kids and families with each other in an informal and fun way. Again, specific dates will be announced closer to October.

Until Covid numbers begin to trend lower, we are hesitant to put our volunteers and children at risk by opening up our **Church Nursery** in the usual way. But the nursery will be open on a Sunday morning for you to use mindfully if your little one needs a break. No volunteers will be on duty, so a parent, grandparent, or responsible adult must stay with their child, and everyone over the age of 2 must be wearing a mask. The Nursery and the Narthex are equipped with speakers so you can hear what is going on in the sanctuary should you need to leave and make use of those areas.

As of now, there will be no **Junior Church** during the 10:15 service. We do know that church doesn't grab the attention of our young ones the same way it does the adults, however, so we are going to "beef up" the children's activity bags that kids can take to their pews to keep their hands busy while they listen. We intentionally want our time of worship to be a welcoming place for all ages and we do our best to keep that in mind when we plan. We think that if it's not keeping the attention of our children, it most likely isn't really keeping the attention of our adults either. ☺

At St. John's we are truly taking things "One day at a time" because, frankly, it's all we can do and we think it's what God is calling us to do in this season. We are doing our best to develop a plan that moves us forward balanced with the realization of the unknown that still surrounds us. One thing remains constant, however, and that is our love for each and every one of you and God's love for us all. The best way we can live that love out loud right now is by making decisions and (flexible) plans that keep us all safe and connected to one another and to the God who has brought us this far and surely will see us through!

I'll leave you with one of my favorite "modern-day beatitudes": Blessed are the flexible for they never get bent out of shape!

Thank you all for your continued support, encouragement, participation, and flexibility!

Rev. Addie



## From the Creation Stewards

Some good news from the Creation Stewards. As of August 13, The Pennsylvania Game Commission has lifted the ban of bird feeders and

bird baths, as the mysterious illness causing a high number of songbird deaths across Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware seems to have resolved itself, thanks in part to the general communities' help in limiting the spread of whatever was harming the bird population.

For more information, read the announcement from The Pennsylvania Game Commission <https://www.media.pa.gov/Pages/game-commission-details.aspx?newsid=493&fbclid=IwAR2yPR8Y5ERvHVaqVrwnedsgx2ZOuCKOgTU3T7NuPzSlPNgPGvLfhOLDEvc>

### Articles Due for October Issue Deadline: September 12

Leaders: Please provide articles for these coming events for the next *Enlightener* issue (if feasible):

- ✝ World Communion Sunday
- ✝ Neighbors in Need Offering
- ✝ Manna Sunday
- ✝ Fall Bible Study
- ✝ Prayer Shawl Sunday
- ✝ Indigenous Peoples' Day
- ✝ Reformation Day

All submissions must include your name and phone number and be typed or printed. Submissions can be placed in the *Enlightener* bin in the Church Office (bottom bin) or emailed to [erickinsey46@gmail.com](mailto:erickinsey46@gmail.com). If you have questions, please call Eric Kinsey at 215.513.2237.

The *Enlightener* is published monthly except for July and August by St. John's United Church of Christ, 500 West Main Street, Lansdale, Pennsylvania 19446. Eric Kinsey, Editor: [erickinsey46@gmail.com](mailto:erickinsey46@gmail.com)

Summary Of May And YTD Income And Expense	May 2021	Jan—May 2021
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>		
<b>Income</b>		
Current Tithes/Offerings	20,853.00	168,971.65
Event Income/Fundraisers	25.00	1,170.00
Flowers	320.00	1,495.00
Investment Income	0.00	336.31
Rental Income	3,050.00	17,550.00
Use of Building Income	0.00	1,420.00
Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income	74.00	1,572.17
Interest Income, Savings Accounts	1.01	4.83
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>24,323.01</b>	<b>192,519.96</b>
<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>24,323.01</b>	<b>192,519.96</b>
<b>Expense</b>		
Salaries and Benefits	34,583.12	172,782.08
Elders Expenses	0.00	614.23
Deacons Expenses	0.00	1,033.77
Educators Expenses	500.00	3,131.85
Trustees/Building Expenses	1,022.86	6,045.25
Building Operation Expenses	3,364.74	27,852.27
Operating Expenses	3,826.33	21,466.90
Miscellaneous Expenses	0.00	1,149.39
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>43,297.05</b>	<b>234,075.74</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>-18,974.04</b>	<b>-41,555.78</b>
Budgeted Transfers From Investments	9,221.08	45,769.09
<b>Net Ordinary Income Plus Transfers</b>	<b>-9,752.96</b>	<b>4,213.31</b>
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>		
<b>Other Income</b>		
Artist Series Income—Special	0.00	925.00
Benevolence Offerings	3,930.00	34,522.04
Special Accounts	1,557.00	21,549.91
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>5,487.00</b>	<b>56,996.95</b>
<b>Other Expense</b>		
Artist Series Fund Expenditures	0.00	543.34
Benevolence Disbursements	7,429.00	45,709.27
Special Fund Expenditures	4,391.56	13,353.37
<b>Total Other Expense</b>	<b>11,820.56</b>	<b>59,605.98</b>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>12,669.99</b>	<b>18,090.14</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-6,333.56</b>	<b>-2,609.03</b>
<b>Net Income Plus Transfers</b>	<b>2,917.03</b>	<b>22,303.45</b>

St. John's United Church of Christ  
Minutes from Zoom meeting  
Monday, June 14, 2021  
*"Journeying in Faith,  
Through Thick and Thin"*



**Financial Report: Sandy and Bob Taylor, Cotreasurers:**

May was a poor month financially. Our expenses were \$43,297.05, the lowest of any month so far this year. But our income of \$33,544.09 was by far the lowest of any month this year. Fortunately, entering May our income had well exceeded our expenses, so even with the disappointing May income we remain slightly ahead year-to-date.

Our 2021 commitment to "Our Church's Wider Mission" (OCWM) remains at \$46,460, or about \$3,872 a month. May contributions were a bit low at \$2,867. Nonetheless, we remain ahead year-to-date. Thanks to all who have supported this important effort.

Please feel free to share your questions or concerns with our cotreasurers, Sandy and Bob Taylor.

**Staff Reports:**

**Rev. Dr. Sue Bertollette, Senior Pastor:**

If crowds attending the 9:00 AM service during the summer warrants a second service, it will be considered. It is hoped two services can be resumed in the fall.

**Rev. Addie Stong, Associate Pastor:**

Sunday School, Junior Church, and Nursery volunteers will be needed once it is safe to return. Staffing will need to be addressed.

**Andrew Paulson, Minister of Music:**

Audio recordings of choirs and soloists have ended with the beginning of in-person worship services.

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Ensembles and vocalists will be used in July and August for special music during worship. We hope to resume a regular choir schedule in the fall.

**Abbie Lampe, Minister of Music for Children and Youth:**

Abbie will continue to work using Zoom in some format for Children's Choir since new children were involved this way and she would like to keep them connected.

**Lisa Delp, Office Administrator:**

Two families were helped with utilities and rent totaling \$750. Volunteers will be called back to the church. There is a need for Chancel Flower Ministry.

**Board Reports:**

Deacons

- Picnic Date of September 19 is noted.

Educators

- Nothing new to report.

Elders

- Nothing new to report.

Trustees

- A leak in the ridge of the slate roof over the school building needs to be repaired. The trustees went with the less expensive of two options for repair at a cost savings of \$7,000. The quote for this option is \$10,023. It was recommended this come from the Capital Projects Fund with a balance of \$159,000.

**Old Business:**

Vison and Mission Ministries

Payment has been made and the check was picked up by Rev. Mark Bethala. He was very grateful for St. John's generous donation.

**New Business:**

UCC Website

The website contains many seminars and resources. St. John's may not always align with what is posted, but information is available.

**With Sympathy**

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Carol Danweber, Walter Detweiler, Jane Gammel, Barb Gassler, Mary Belle Krewson, and Jason Roush, who passed away recently.



When we resume having two worship services on September 12, both the United Adult Class and the Mainstream Adult Class will resume meeting at 9:00 AM.

The United Adult Class

will be meeting in the Library, adjacent to the Sanctuary, and Mainstream will be meeting in the Activity Room on the lower level of the education building. Please join us!

This fall's Bible Study, which will occur on five Wednesday evenings beginning October 20, will focus on the inseparable connection between mental health and spiritual health, and will take a look at what scripture has to teach us about both. More details to come, as well as information regarding whether our Fall Study will take place in person or via Zoom. Mark your calendars and plan to join us for important conversation on a topic that has gained much needed attention as many struggle to maintain their mental health amid the ongoing pandemic.



*Sunday, September 26, at 12:15 PM under the tall oak tree in St. John's meditation garden. All furry, feathered, scale-covered creatures and their humans are welcome!*

Summary Of June And YTD Income And Expense	June 2021	Jan-June 2021
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>		
<b>Income</b>		
Counters Discrepancies	-30.00	-30.00
Current Tithes/Offerings	43,448.00	212,419.65
Event Income/Fundraisers	0.00	1,170.00
Flowers	160.00	1,655.00
Investment Income	0.00	336.31
Rental Income	3,050.00	20,600.00
Use of Building Income	300.00	1,720.00
Youth Group	1,000.00	1,000.00
Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income	221.00	1,793.17
Interest Income, Savings Accounts	.91	5.74
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>48,149.91</b>	<b>240,669.87</b>
<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>48,149.91</b>	<b>240,669.87</b>
<b>Expense</b>		
Salaries and Benefits	35,328.91	208,110.99
Elders Expenses	0.00	614.23
Deacons Expenses	175.00	1,208.77
Educators Expenses	894.96	4,026.81
Trustees/Building Expenses	5,576.33	11,621.58
Building Operation Expenses	2,752.16	30,604.43
Operating Expenses	2,749.94	24,216.84
Miscellaneous Expenses	54.60	1,203.99
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>47,531.90</b>	<b>281,607.64</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>618.01</b>	<b>-40,937.77</b>
Budgeted Transfers From Investments	9,221.08	54,990.17
<b>Net Ordinary Income Plus Transfers</b>	<b>9,839.09</b>	<b>14,052.40</b>
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>		
<b>Other Income</b>		
Artist Series Income—Special	0.00	925.00
Benevolence Offerings	6,626.00	41,148.04
Special Accounts	3,796.00	25,345.91
Immediate-Needs Income	2,295.00	2,295.00
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>12,717.00</b>	<b>69,713.95</b>
<b>Other Expense</b>		
Artist Series Fund Expenditures	0.00	543.34
Benevolence Disbursements	3,898.00	49,607.27
Special Fund Expenditures	6,789.38	20,142.75
Immediate-Needs Expense	15,631.00	15,631.00
<b>Total Other Expense</b>	<b>26,318.38</b>	<b>85,924.36</b>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>-13,601.38</b>	<b>-16,210.41</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-12,983.37</b>	<b>-57,148.18</b>
<b>Net Income Plus Transfers</b>	<b>-3,762.29</b>	<b>-2,158.01</b>

**St. John's United  
Church of Christ  
Minutes from  
Zoom meeting  
Monday,  
August 9, 2021**



**Financial Report:**

**Sandy and Bob Taylor, Cotreasureers:**

June and July were a study in contrasts. June was a very good month financially. Income exceeded expenses by about \$10,000. But expenses were up in July and our tithes and offerings were about \$9,000 lower, so June's largess was largely offset in July. Still, year-to-date our income (including budgeted investment transfers) slightly exceeds our expenses, a desirable situation we have not found ourselves in at the end of July for many years.

Contributions to OCWM in both June and July were good, and we are well ahead of the pace we need to meet our 2021 goal.

Please feel free to share your questions or concerns with our cotreasureers, Sandy and Bob Taylor.

**Staff Reports:**

**Rev. Dr. Sue Bertollette, Senior Pastor:**

Two services are planned to resume after Labor Day with the 8 AM and 10:15 AM worship services.

The Covid Team met on Tuesday, August 3. More details to follow.

**Rev. Addie Stong, Associate Pastor:**

VBS is in the final month. Two in-person gatherings were held with good attendance. A third and final in-person gathering is planned for August.

**Andrew Paulson, Minister of Music:**

The music department continues to adapt within the ever-changing landscape of Covid.

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As an uncertain remainder of summer and fall approaches, we continue to offer safe music-making opportunities for all worshipers and ensemble participants. Plans are in motion to allow for ensembles to make music during this time. These plans include wearing masks, social distancing, shorter rehearsal lengths, and rehearsing in the sanctuary. Concerts and recitals for the 2021/2022 Artist Series are currently planned, with the understanding that plans may change as the fall approaches. As always, your patience and flexibility are appreciated as we move into yet another unknown period.

**Abbie Lampe, Minister of Music for Children and Youth:**

Addie, Andrew, and Abbie are discussing plans for music making for children.

**Lisa Delp, Office Administrator:**

Since our last meeting in June, four families have been helped with utilities, air-conditioning and heater replacement, temporary housing, roof repair, and grocery gift cards, totaling \$2707. St. John's worked with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Trinity Lutheran, and St. Stanislaus to cover larger-cost items.

**Leroy Horst, Superintendent of Building and Grounds:**

See Trustees report.

**Board Reports:**

Trustees

- Painting of Montessori School rooms is almost complete thanks to Leroy and volunteers.
- Plexiglas over upstairs windows in Montessori rooms was old and warped and has been removed. Trustees received a quote from Alderfer Glass for a triple-frame safety glass window insert. The windows would be installed by Leroy and trustees. There are 21 pairs of windows, both upper and lower, for a total cost of \$7455. A motion was made and passed unanimously to use the Immediate Needs Fund (balance \$55K) for payment.

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Signs of water penetration inside Montessori rooms has been noticed. Interior stucco is loose and window trim inside is rotting. Repairs are underway. The ridge cap and broken slates have been repaired over this damaged area.

#### Educators

- The theme for our new church year is "Remember, Seek, and Grow." Pastor Addie has ordered the item to be handed out on Sunday, September 19, 2021, at church and at the church picnic.

#### Elders

- A question was raised regarding reporting on attendance. The hospitality teams are counting attendance weekly. Elders will check into reporting.

#### Deacons

- Church Picnic and Basket Raffle to be held on September 19 at Plains Mennonite Church.

#### **Old Business:**

##### Covid Team meeting update

St. John's has been conservative and following CDC guidelines with Covid.

##### Lansdale Day review

A successful turnout was noted for our booth.

#### **New Business:**

##### Basket Raffle

Raffle will be held at the Church Picnic on September 19, 2021.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to a basket! Each basket looks so tempting, you'll want to put tickets in all of them! A preview of the 33 baskets is on the St. John's Facebook page. They will be on display and tickets will be on sale in the Assembly Hall after the worship service on August 22, 29 and September 5, 12 and 19.

*[continued at right]*

On September 19, tickets will also be available for purchase during the church picnic at Plains Mennonite Church Pavilion. Winners will be drawn during the picnic. You do not need to be present to win (but we hope you are!). Hint: To save yourself from the chore of writing your information on the back of every raffle ticket, bring along preprinted address labels and include your phone number! If you have questions, call or email Judy Johnston at 215.896.9381 or [twostitches@comcast.net](mailto:twostitches@comcast.net).

We have been coming together for worship in the sanctuary in person for two months now and enjoying fellowship and feeding our spirits. Now, after so many months of being apart we are happy to be able to announce our **St. John's Church Picnic** will be held on **September 19, 2021, Plains Park Pavilion**, next to the Plains Mennonite Church. There will be food, fellowship, and the chance for us to all sit down and reconnect.



The deacons will be cooking hamburgers and hot dogs for everyone. Each family will be responsible for their own sides

and desserts (we hope to get back to the shared covered dishes next year). The church will also be providing beverages (lemonade, iced tea, and water). There will be a signup sheet in the Narthex and we will be posting an announcement on St. John's Facebook page so we can get an idea of the number of people attending.

Summary Of Last Month And YTD Income And Expense	July 2021	Jan-July 2021
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>		
Income		
Counters Discrepancies	0.00	-30.00
Current Tithes/Offerings	30,805.00	243,224.65
Event Income/Fundraisers	0.00	1,170.00
Flowers	50.00	1,705.00
Investment Income	5,991.50	6,327.81
Rental Income	0.00	20,600.00
Use of Building Income	160.00	1,880.00
Youth Group	0.00	1,000.00
Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income	0.00	1,793.17
Interest Income, Savings Accounts	0.95	6.69
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>37,007.45</b>	<b>277,677.32</b>
<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>37,007.45</b>	<b>277,677.32</b>
Expense		
Salaries and Benefits	34,583.12	242,694.11
Elders Expenses	753.32	1,367.55
Deacons Expenses	304.99	1,513.76
Educators Expenses	911.46	4,938.27
Trustees/Building Expenses	6,416.82	18,038.40
Building Operation Expenses	3,222.54	33,826.97
Operating Expenses	4,764.41	28,981.25
Miscellaneous Expenses	0.00	1,203.99
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>50,956.66</b>	<b>332,564.30</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>-13,949.21</b>	<b>-54,886.98</b>
Budgeted Trnsfrs From Investments	9,221.08	54,990.17
<b>Net Ordinary Income Plus Transfers</b>	<b>4,728.13</b>	<b>9,325.27</b>
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>		
Other Income		
Artist Series Income—Special	0.00	925.00
Benevolence Offerings	5,036.00	46,184.04
Special Accounts	2,740.00	28,085.91
Immediate-Needs Income	13,180.00	15,475.00
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>20,956.00</b>	<b>90,669.95</b>
Other Expense		
Artist Series Fund Expenditures	186.50	729.84
Benevolence Disbursements	7,581.04	57,188.31
Special Fund Expenditures	8,016.00	28,158.75
Immediate-Needs Expense	0.00	15,631.00
<b>Total Other Expense</b>	<b>15,783.54</b>	<b>101,707.90</b>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>5,172.46</b>	<b>-11,037.95</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-8,776.75</b>	<b>-65,924.93</b>
<b>Net Income Plus Transfers</b>	<b>444.33</b>	<b>-1,713.68</b>

## Montgomery County Activities

### Stream Exploration

**August 20, 2021, 11:00 AM–12:00 PM @**

#### **Norristown Farm Park**

Ever wonder what lives in the local creeks? Come explore the Stony Creek and discover all the critters that call it home. Observe a variety of aquatic creatures including water bugs and maybe even a frog or salamander. All animals will be released unharmed. Be prepared to get wet and wear closed toed shoes! We will provide all supplies needed to catch the critters. Limited space available, Registration required. All Ages Free.

### Full Moon Hike

**August 22, 2021, 7:45 PM–9:00 PM @ Norristown Farm Park**

Come experience a hike under the almost full moon. This nearly two-mile hike will be led by park ranger Dave. See some nocturnal animals and experience the starry sky. Wear sturdy shoes for hiking. Ages 8 to Adult Free.

**August 28, 2021, 2:00 PM–3:00 PM @ Norristown Farm Park**

Join Delaware Valley Amateur Astronomers to learn about observing planets, stars, galaxies, and other celestial objects. This will be an indoor event. Limited space available, Registration required. Ages 12 to Adult Free.

### Historic Cooking, Ice Cream

**August 28, 2021, 11:00 AM–3:00 PM @ Pottsgrove Manor**

See select 18th century items from the Pottsgrove Manor collection up close and ask your questions for the curator one weekend while summer treats are also being created in the reproduction kitchen the next. Visit every week to see something from our cook and our collections. The first floor of the museum will be open for visitors to view at their leisure.

## Were You There?

Thirty Years Ago: St. John's participated with our fellow churches in the PSEC of the UCC in a special collection for Christian Concern, Inc., dedicated to developing and managing low-to-moderate income housing in our area.

Twenty-five Years Ago: A support group for single moms had its first meeting at St. John's.

Twenty Years Ago: The opening meeting of St. John's Youth took place as a swimming party at the home of Tom and Mary Fisher.

Fifteen Years Ago: At the September meeting of Church Women United, Leslie Merzig, a North Penn graduate and Telford resident discussed her two-month experience on a hospital ship.

Ten Years Ago: St. John's held an Activity Fair during social hour on September 11. Representatives from all our volunteer activities provided information about the many opportunities to participate.

Five Years Ago: St. John's UCC, the founder of Manna on Main Street, joined with the community to celebrate the move from their then-current location to North Penn Commons by forming a human chain of movers from the old location to the new.

One Year Ago: On September 20 we celebrated David Furniss and his 33 years of excellent music ministry at St. John's.



## News from the Pews



As I write to you this month, it is a rather warm, summer afternoon. Temperatures are predicted to rise into the 90s,

but the humidity will make it feel much hotter. No, this little church mouse has not suddenly taken an interest in meteorology. It just occurred to me that what is true of the weather is true of so many things we must deal with in life, and that is *this, too, shall pass*.

*[continued at right]*

We know it will not always be hot and sticky outside. In fact, come winter, when temperatures are plummeting, the wind is blowing and snow is falling, many will be wishing for the toasty, sunny days of summer. Even as the weather changes, so, too, the climate and circumstances of the world around us change. We will not always be living amid a global pandemic. We will not always be wearing masks—even if we are vaccinated—to help protect the most vulnerable among us. We will not always need to alter our travel plans due to COVID-related concerns. Yet, for now, we do our best to make decisions that take into consideration the well-being of those around us as we wait and prepare for better days ahead.

Not lost on me is the fact that early on in the pandemic, a sign Rev. Sue placed in front of the porch leading into her office is still there. It has survived all sorts of weather conditions and has been set and reset as different plants and flowers have grown up around it. One day, I was sure Rev. Sue was going to remove it, but then she thought better of it and carefully repositioned the sign, making sure its message was visible. "Hope isn't cancelled" are the words on the sign and, now more than ever—as people's patience grows thin and pandemic fatigue continues to claim its victims—this little church mouse is counting on these words to urge us forward and help us keep on keeping on.

When we resume our more familiar schedule of having two worship services on September 12, and creative plans are set in motion for keeping our children and youth safely involved in the life of the church, things may not look like they once did, but that isn't necessarily a bad thing. Here's hoping we will help each other through the challenging days ahead as we look toward the future and more opportunities to be together!

AMOS



*Below you will find the chancel flower donation list for September 2021. Please review this list and contact the church office if you would like to remove/add/update any information on the list.*

*Reminder—the requested donation for the listing is \$25.*

*September 5*

*In memory of Donald Gibson Sr's September 6<sup>th</sup> birthday from Donna Wardle and family*

*In memory of Helen Huckins's September 11<sup>th</sup> birthday and Mary Decker's September 13<sup>th</sup> birthday from Edna Decker*

*In honor of Sandy and Bob Taylor's September 11<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary*

*September 12*

*Remembering with love, Bill Rogers and other family loved ones, from the MacKinstry/Rogers family*

*In memory of Ruth Ekberg from her daughter, Sandy, and Scott Brown*

*September 19*

*In memory of Bob Kinsey's September 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday from his wife, Ruth*

*September 26 Gold Star Mother's Day 2021*

*In honor of Gold Star Mother's Day from Jean Roshong*

*In memory of son Ted Smith's October 1<sup>st</sup> birthday from Judy Baumgartner*

*In memory of John Burkholder's October 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday from his daughter, Judy, and Alan Johnston and family*

## Chancel Flower Ministry

Thank you for being a part of this important ministry. Many lives have been touched by your efforts.

Starting September 12, flowers should be delivered after the 10:15 AM church service or on Monday. Feel free to deliver the flowers to whomever you want: anyone who is celebrating a birthday or an anniversary, people who are ill, people who are in the hospital, people who need a little extra care. The people you deliver to do not need to be members of St. John's. They can be your friends, loved ones, and neighbors. The flower ministry is part of our outreach.

The flower room is through the door on the left side of the chancel—the side where the pastor preaches. All the supplies you will need are in this room: plastic vases, St. John's Address Directory, cards.

Please take the flowers out of the brass vases and put them into the plastic floral containers located on the shelves in the flower room. Return the liners back into the brass vases. Please include a card for each bouquet. There will be a copy of these instructions in the flower room. If you are out of town on your assigned Sunday, please switch with someone else. Again, many thanks for being a part of St. John's flower ministry.

Lisa

September 5	Barb & Don Fretz
September 12	Jen & Matt Harp
September 19	Anne & Eric Kinsey
September 26	Kathy Allebach

Please leave the plastic liners in the brass vases, they belong to the florist.

**TO THE CONGREGATION OF ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
REV. SUSAN C. BERTOLETTE, SENIOR PASTOR**

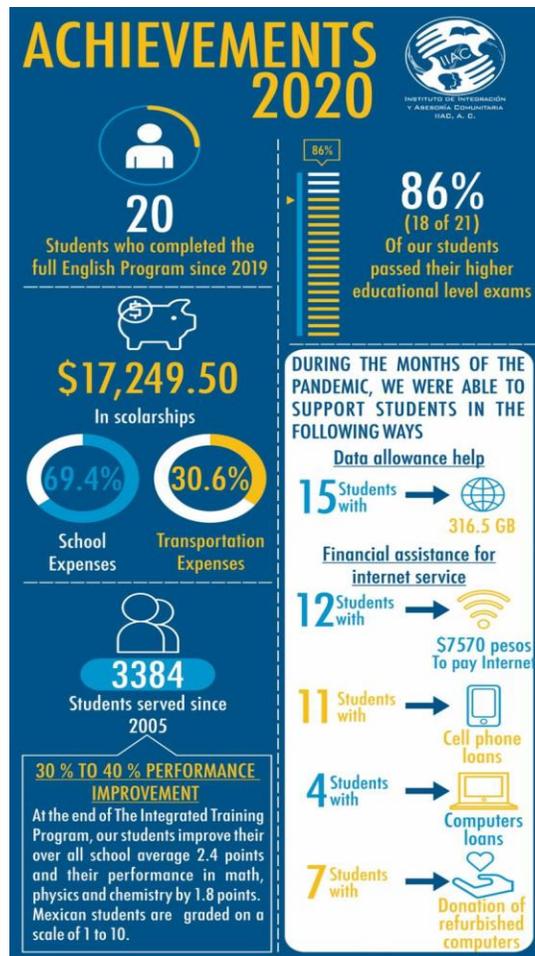
**Greetings from The Oaxaca Learning Center!** I have been wanting to be in touch with you for some time now to express personal thanks for the faithful support members of your congregation have given to the Learning Center over the past few years. Your ongoing financial support has been an important part of helping us to “make a difference – one young person at a time.” I am including a rather detailed update about the Learning Center to help you better understand what we do and how vital the Learning Center is to the Oaxacan community.

Since 2005, The Oaxaca Learning Center (TOLC) has helped more than 3,384 students in vulnerable situations to continue their studies, providing them with support throughout their school career. Its mode of operation is youth to youth, where university students promote learning to middle and high school students with academic counseling, English courses, computer courses, psychological care and workshops such as learning strategies, emotional intelligence and gender issues.

The number of beneficiaries has increased. In 2005 we served 33 students, and currently our monthly average is 150. The programs, services and work team have also expanded, at the beginning we operated with three collaborators and now with 20.

Since March 2020, due to the pandemic, we adapted all our services to online mode. This situation showed us that there are economically disadvantaged young people who do not have a mobile device (computer, cell phone and/or tablet) or internet at home to receive educational services from their schools and those promoted by TOLC.

Below is some numerical data representing our achievements and support provided during 2020:



During the first 6 months of 2021, we have continued to work with our different programs and services.

With the support of the Lending Library Foundation and Friendly Food, we have been able to deliver **4 DELIVERIES OF 25 GROCERIES BASKETS EACH:** February 7, March 21, May 16 & July 24

Working with the Salud Digna Clinic, we delivered a total of 200 passes for eye exams and free eyeglasses.



We have initiated a fundraising campaign, which seeks to finance the remodeling and construction of classrooms and spaces so that the Learning Center can offer its services in the facilities located on Murguía Street, which belong to the same organization. The reasons that lead us to carry out this Campaign are:

Each year more youth and parents request our services . That is why we rented a separate building on Carteros Street for classrooms a few years ago. Our original building, Murguía 703, is just too small. We need space to serve between 110 and 130 students a semester now. But the cost of renting a building is a huge financial burden. We have a responsibility to our students and parents to sustain our program over the long run and we must be more cost efficient. Since we own the building on Murguía we have a unique opportunity to remodel the second floor for classrooms and expand educational services in face-to-face and online modalities.

#### **Benefits:**

- Provide continuity to educational programs against school dropout.
- To offer youth an efficient and technological space of their own.
- Better accommodate our student population with a learning environment specifically suited to our small-group approach
- Eliminate the increasing cost of rent (\$14,400/year, increasing at 5% a year)
- Reduce our total utility costs
- Reduce our environmental impact (solar and environmentally friendly construction)
- Re-create the synergy of a single location for visitors, guests, and students
- Improve organizational management

#### **What will we get out of this project:**

- A large room for workshops
- Three spaces for consulting
- One room for English classes
- A space for psychological support
- A computer room
- A space for coordinations
- 2 bathrooms
- Upstairs we will have a space that will function as a terrace



I understand that right now it might not seem to be a priority to build. But we want to think beyond the pandemic situation. For 15 years, our program has operated on a face-to-face basis, and a big part of its success is the relationship it builds with the students. The personalized contact is vital to our success.

With the pandemic, we've discovered that we can reach more people without the need for them to come to the Learning Center, and that opens up a whole world of possibilities that we want to explore. Looking to the future, we hope to engage more tutors as TOLC expands its services to more students.

Thank you VERY MUCH for your generosity, support and contributions to The Oaxaca Learning Center, none of this would be possible without you.

Finally, here is a link to the video of Efrain Perez "Kevin", which his is a small morsel of his wonderful story of overcoming and dreams fulfilled, all thanks to your support. A special thanks to St. John's United Church of Christ, Lansdale, PA and David Furniss, for all they do for our students. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hoIrlqAIYxc>

Sincerely,

Jaasiel Quero  
*Director*

## St. John's Music Ministry

### *How Can I (Still) Keep from Singing? Making Music in a Global Pandemic, Part Two*

The back page of the 2020 September Enlightener was titled *How Can I Keep from Singing? Making Music in a Global Pandemic*. I had hoped, like all of you, that we would be singing and worshipping like usual in 2021. Well, that is unfortunately not the case. Due to the constantly changing guidelines and safety precautions, ensembles will once again meet in unusual ways. While no ensemble will meet in a completely virtual setting, masks and distancing (when applicable) will be used to allow for in-person rehearsals to safely occur. Additionally, rehearsals will be shorter than normal and will occur in the sanctuary to provide more space for all involved.

*Safety is paramount as we move toward an uncertain fall. No matter what happens, we will still keep singing as we begin part two of making music in a global pandemic.*

Below you will find the different ensembles that rehearse and provide music in worship at St. John's. If you are a member of any of the below ensembles, please watch your email for details on how/when you will be making music this fall. If you are interested in joining any of the below ensembles, please email Andrew Paulson, Minister of Music, at [andrew@st-johns-ucc.org](mailto:andrew@st-johns-ucc.org).

#### Vocal Ensembles

Chancel Choir: *Four-part singing*  
Chancel Choir Friends: *Joins the Chancel Choir for seasonal singing opportunities*  
United Voices: *Unison and two-part singing*  
Children's Choir: *Singing for children between kindergarten and sixth grade*

#### Instrumental Ensembles

United Ringers: *Handbell ensemble*  
St. John's Wind Ensemble  
St. John's Brass  
St. John's Dixieland Band  
The Uke-artists: *Ukulele ensemble*



Welcome to the 34<sup>th</sup> season of the St. John's Artist Series! Our hope is to have all events occur *in-person*, but that is subject to change. The original plan was to begin the season with a rousing hymn festival, but that will not be possible given current circumstances. So, the season will begin a bit later than usual, in November, with the hopes of the annual Christmas choral concert occurring in December. Thank you for your support as we safely return to live concerts and events!

***October 17, 2021, 4pm – The Way of Jesus: His Mission in Word and Song: A Hymn Festival  
POSTPOSED, DATE TBD***

November 14, 2021, 4pm – Jocelyn Crosby, flute, and Doug Wimer, piano

December 12, 2021, 4pm – Christmas Concert

March 27, 2022, 4pm – Andrew Paulson, piano, and John Pennington, vibraphone

April 10, 2022, 4pm – Spring Concert

Your donations make wonderful music occur, even in such difficult times. If you are able, please consider becoming a patron at any of the following levels. Thank you for your support!

\_\_\_Benefactor (\$200+) \_\_\_Sponsor (\$100-199) \_\_\_Donor (\$50-99) \_\_\_Friend (\$25-49)

Name as you would like it to appear in Artist Series Programs \_\_\_\_\_